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F A B L E S

FOR THE

F E M A L E S E X.

By the late MR. MOORE,

K

THE FOURTH EDITION.



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P R E F A C E.

THE following FABLES were written at intervals, when I found myself in humour, and disengaged from matters of greater moment. As they are the writings of an idle hour, so they are intended for the reading of those, whose only business is amusement. My hopes of profit, or applause, are not immoderate; nor have I printed thro' necessity, or request of friends. I have leave from her Royal Highness to address her, and I claim the fair for my readers. My fears are lighter than my expectations; I wrote to please myself, and I publish to please others; and this so universally, that I have not wished for correctness to rob the critic of his censure, or my friend of the laugh.

P R E F A C E.

My intimates are few, and I am not solicitous to increase them. I have learnt, that where the writer would please, the man should be unknown. An author is the reverse of all other objects, and magnifies by distance, but diminishes by approach. His private attachments must give place to public favour ; for no man can forgive his friend the ill-natured attempt of being thought wiser than himself.

To avoid therefore the misfortunes that may attend me from any accidental success, I think it necessary to inform those who know me, that I have been assisted in the following papers by the author of *Gustavus Vasa*. Let the crime of pleasing be his, whose talents as a writer, and whose virtues as a man, have rendered him a living affront to the whole circle of his acquaintance.

C O N-



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The Magpie & the Chicken

a Fable

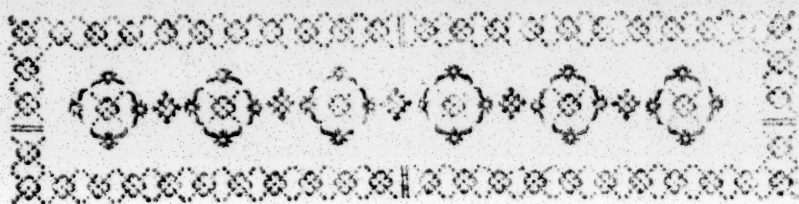
to Sukey, with this Book.

Go - by parental Fona refs sent
Go little Book thy self present
And tell her whose unletter'd eye
Seeks the Instruction of the page,
Wisdom to learn they need nor roam
Whose Mothers act like hers at home.

A Pe the pert. of her race
With Teachers band bedeckt her Face
Aloft the female Pedant stood
Harangued her Sisters of the wood.
Told them how vain the boast of Fame,
That titles were an empty name,
That all the world esteemd was idle,
That youth should shove away Fancy's bridle,
Beswaid the fading glow of Beauty,
And babbl'd of domestic duty.
Ran every Topic o'er and o'er
And hackney'd all the moral lore,
Which had been said in prose or rhyme
From Adam to the present Time.

A Chicken from the neighboring Glade,
By chance in search of food had strayed,
And next at the declaiming Sage,
Thus unawares expressed her Rage:
Why about Virtue all this prattle
I see it in the Hen my Mother,
Leave Pedant Fool the trade of teaching
The practise: — while thou art preaching.





F A B L E S
FOR THE
F E M A L E S E X.



F A B. I.

The EAGLE, *and the Assembly of* BIRDS.

To her Royal Highness the Princess of
W A L E S.

THE moral lay, to beauty due,
I write, *Fair Excellence*, to you ;
Well pleas'd to hope my vacant hours
Have been employ'd to sweeten yours.
Truth under fiction I impart,
To weed out folly from the heart,

B

And

And shew the paths, that lead astray
The wandering nymph from wisdom's way.

I flatter none. The great and good
Are by their actions understood;
Your monument if actions raise,
Shall I deface by idle praise?
I echo not the voice of fame,
That dwells delighted on your name;
Her friendly tale, however true,
Were flatt'ry, if I told it you.

The proud, the envious, and the vain,
The jilt, the prude, demand my strain;
To these, detesting praise, I write,
And vent, in charity, my spite;
With friendly hand I hold the glass
To all, promiscuous as they pass:
Should folly there her likeness view,
I fret not that the mirror's true;
If the fantastic form offend,
I made it not, but would amend.

Virtue, in every clime and age,
Spurns at the folly-soothing page,
While satire, that offends the ear
Of vice and passion, pleases her.

Premising

Premising this, your anger spare,
And claim the fable, you, who dare.

THE birds in place, by factions press'd,
To Jupiter their pray'rs address'd;
By specious lies the state was vex'd,
Their counsels libellers perplex'd;
They begg'd (to stop seditious tongues)
A gracious hearing of their wrongs.
Jove grants their suit. The Eagle sat
Decider of the grand debate.

The pye, to trust and pow'r preferr'd,
Demands permission to be heard.
Says he, prolixity of phrase
You know I hate: This libel says,
"Some birds there are, who, prone to noise,
"Are hir'd to silence wisdom's voice,
"And skill'd to chatter out the hour,
"Rise by their emptiness to pow'r."
That this is aim'd direct at me,
No doubt, you'll readily agree;
Yet well this sage assembly knows,
By parts to government I rose;

My prudent counsels prop the state ;
Magpies were never known to prate.

The Kite rose up. His honest heart
In virtue's suff'rings bore a part.
That there were birds of prey he knew ;
So far the libeller said true ;
“ Voracious, bold, to rapine prone,
“ Who knew no int'rest but their own ;
“ Who hov'ring o'er the farmer's yard,
“ Nor pigeon, chick, nor duckling spar'd.”
This might be true, but if apply'd
To him, in troth, the fland'rer ly'd.
Since ign'rance then might be mislead,
Such things, he thought, were best unsaid.

The Crow was vex'd. As yester-morn
He flew across the new-sown corn,
A screaming boy was set for pay,
He knew, to drive the crows away ;
Scandal had found him out in turn,
And buzz'd abroad, that crows love corn.

The Owl arose, with solemn face,
And thus harangu'd upon the case.
That magpies prate, it may be true,
A kite may be voracious too,

Crows

Crows sometimes deal in new-sown pease;
He libels not, who strikes at these;
The slander's here—"But there are birds,
"Whose wisdom lies in looks not words;
"Blund'ers, who level in the dark,
"And always shoot beside the mark."
He names not me; but these are hints,
Which manifest at whom he squints;
I were indeed that blund'ring fowl,
To question if he meant an owl.

Ye wretches, hence! the Eagle cries,
'Tis conscience, conscience that applies;
The virtuous mind takes no alarm,
Secur'd by innocence from harm;
While guilt, and his associate fear,
Are startled at the passing air.



FABLE II.

*The PANTHER, the HORSE, and other
BEASTS.*

THE man, who seeks to win the fair,
 (So custom says) must truth forbear;
 Must fawn and flatter, cringe and lie,
 And raise the goddess to the sky:
 For truth is hateful to her ear,
 A rudeness, which she cannot bear.
 A rudeness? Yes. I speak my thoughts;
 For truth upbraids her with her faults.

How wretched, Cloe, then am I,
 Who love you, and yet cannot lie!
 And still to make you less my friend,
 I strive your errors to amend!
 But shall the senseless fop impart
 The softest passion to your heart,
 While he, who tells you honest truth,
 And points to happiness your youth,

Determines,

F A B L E S

7

Determines, by his care, his lot,
And lives neglected and forgot ?

Trust me, my dear, with greater ease
Your taste for flatt'ry I could please,
And similies in each dull line,
Like glow-worms in the dark, should shine.
What if I say your lips disclose
The freshness of the op'ning rose ?
Or that your cheeks are beds of flow'rs,
Enripen'd by refreshing show'rs ?
Yet certain as these flow'rs shall fade,
Time every beauty will invade.
The butterfly, of various hue,
More than the flow'r resembles you ;
Fair, flatt'ring, fickle, busy thing,
To pleasure ever on the wing,
Gayly coquetting for an hour,
To die, and ne'er be thought of more.

Would you the bloom of youth should last ?
'Tis virtue that must bind it fast ;
An easy carriage, wholly free
From sour reserve, or levity ;
Good-natur'd mirth, an open heart,
And looks unskill'd in any art ;

Humility

Humility enough to own
 The frailties which a friend makes known ;
 And decent pride, enough to know
 The worth that virtue can bestow.

These are the charms which ne'er decay,
 Though youth and beauty fade away ;
 And time, which all things else removes,
 Still heighten's virtue, and improves.

You'll frown, and ask to what intent
 This blunt address to you is sent ?
 I'll spare the question, and confess
 I'd praise you, if I lov'd you less ;
 But rail, be angry, or complain,
 I will be rude, while you are vain.

BENEATH a lion's peaceful reign,
 When beasts met friendly on the plain,
 A Panther of majestic port,
 (The vainest female of the court),
 With spotted skin, and eyes of fire,
 Fill'd every bosom with desire.
 Where-e'er she mov'd, a servile crowd
 Of fawning creatures cringe'd and bow'd :
 Assemblies every week she held,
 (Like modern belles) with coxcombs fill'd,
 Where

Where noise, and nonsense, and grimace,
And lies, and scandal, fill'd the place.

Behold the gay, fantastic thing,
Encircled by the spacious ring.

Low-bowing, with important look,
As first in rank, the Monkey spoke.

"Gad take me, madam, but I swear,

"No angel ever look'd so fair:

"Forgive my rudeness, but I vow,

"You were not quite divine till now;

"Those limbs! that shape! and then those
"eyes?

"O, close them, or the gazer dies!"

Nay, gentle pug, for goodness hush;

I vow, and swear, you make me blush;

I shall be angry at this rate;

'Tis so like flatt'ry, which I hate.

The Fox, in deeper cunning vers'd,

The beauties of her mind rehears'd,

And talk'd of knowledge, taste, and sense,

To which the fair have vast pretence!

Yet well he knew them always vain

Of what they strive not to attain,

And play'd so cunningly his part,

That pug was rival'd in his art.

The

The Goat avow'd his am'rous flame,
And burnt—for what he durst not name;
Yet hop'd a meeting in the wood
Might make his meaning understood.
Half angry at the bold address,
She frown'd; but yet she must confess,
Such beauties might inflame his blood,
But still his phrase was somewhat rude.

The Hog her neatness much admir'd;
The formal Ass her swiftness fir'd;
While all to feed her folly strove,
And by their praises shar'd her love.

The Horse, whose generous heart disdain'd
Applause, by servile flattery gain'd,
With graceful courage, silence broke,
And thus with indignation spoke.

When flatt'ring monkeys fawn, and prate
They justly raise contempt, or hate;
For merit's turn'd to ridicule,
Applauded by the grinning fool.
The artful fox your wit commends,
To lure you to his selfish ends;
From the vile flatt'rer turn away,
For knaves make friendships to betray.

Dismiss

Dismiss the train of fops, and fools,
And learn to live by wisdom's rules ;
Such beauties might the lion warm,
Did not your folly break the charm ;
For who would court that lovely shape,
To be the rival of an ape ?

He said ; and snorting in disdain,
Spurn'd at the crowd, and sought the plain.



F A B. III.

The NIGHTINGALE and GLOW-WORM.

THE prudent nymph, whose cheeks dis-
close

The lily, and the blushing rose,
From public view her charms will screen
And rarely in the crowd be seen ;
This simple truth shall keep her wise,
“ The fairest fruits attract the flies.”

ONE night a Glow worm, proud and vain,
Contemplating her glitt’ring train,
Cry’d, sure there never was in nature
- So elegant, so fine a creature.
All other insects that I see,
The frugal ant, industrious bee,
Or silk-worm, with contempt I view ;
With all that low, mechanic crew,
Who servilely their lives employ
In business, enemy to joy :

Mean vulgar herd ! ye are my scorn,
For grandeur only I was born,
Or sure am sprung from race divine,
And place'd on earth, to live and shine.
Those lights, that sparkle so on high,
Are but the glow-worms of the sky,
And kings on earth their gems admire,
Because they imitate my fire.

She spoke. Attentive on a spray,
A Nightingale forebore his lay ;
He saw the shining morsel near,
And flew, directed by the glare ;
A while he gaz'd with sober look,
And thus the trembling prey bespoke.

Deluded fool, with pride elate,
Know, 'tis thy beauty brings thy fate :
Less dazzling, long thou might'st have lain
Unheeded on the velvet plain :
Pride, soon or late, degraded mourns,
And beauty wrecks whom she adorns.



F A B. IV.

HYMEN, *and* DEATH.

SIXTEEN, d'ye say? Nay then 'tis time,
 S Another year destroys your prime.
 But stay—the settlement! “That’s made.”
 Why then’s my simple girl afraid?
 Yet hold a moment, if you can,
 And heedfully the fable scan.

THE shades were fled, the morning
 blush’d,
 The winds were in their caverns hush’d,
 When Hymen, pensive and sedate,
 Held o’er the fields his musing gait.
 Behind him, through the green-wood shade,
 Death’s meagre form the god survey’d;
 Who quickly, with gigantic stride,
 Out-went his pace and join’d his side.
 The chat on various subjects ran,
 Till angry Hymen thus began.

Re-

Relentless Death, whose iron sway
Mortals reluctant must obey,
Still of thy pow'r shall I complain,
And thy too partial hand arraign?
When Cupid brings a pair of hearts,
All over stuck with equal darts,
Thy cruel shafts my hopes deride,
And cut the knot that Hymen ty'd.

Shall not the bloody, and the bold,
The miser, hoarding up his gold,
The harlot, reeking from the stew,
Alone thy fell revenge pursue?
But must the gentle, and the kind,
Thy fury, undistinguish'd, find?

The monarch calmly thus reply'd;
Weigh well the cause, and then decide.
That friend of yours you lately nam'd,
Cupid, alone is to be blam'd;
Then let the charge be justly laid;
That idle boy neglects his trade,
And hardly once in twenty years,
A couple to your temple bears.
The wretches whom your office blends,
Silenus now, or Plutus, sends;

Hence care, and bitterness, and strife,
Are common to the nuptial life.

Believe me ; more than all mankind
Your vot'ries my compassion find ;
Yet cruel am I call'd, and base,
Who seek the wretched to release ;
The captive from his bonds to free,
Indissoluble but for me.

'Tis I entice him to the yoke :
By me, your crowded altars smoke :
For mortals boldly dare the noose,
Secure that death will set them loose.



F A B. V.

The POET, and his PATRON.

WHY, Coelia, is your spreading waist
 So loose, so negligently lace'd?
 Why must the wrapping bed-gown hide
 Your snowy bosom's swelling pride?
 How ill that dress adorns your head,
 Distain'd, and rumpled from the bed!
 Those clouds, that shade your blooming face,
 A little water might displace,
 As Nature every morn bestows
 The crystal dew, to cleanse the rose.
 Those tresses, as the raven black,
 That wav'd in ringlets down your back,
 Uncomb'd, and injur'd by neglect,
 Destroy the face, which once they deck'd.

Whence this forgetfulness of dress?
 Pray, madam, are you married? Yes.

Nay, then indeed the wonder ceases,
No matter now how loose your dress is,
The end is won, your fortune's made,
Your sister now may take the trade.

Alas! what pity 'tis to find
This fault in half the female kind!
From hence proceed aversion, strife,
And all that sours the wedded life.
Beauty can only point the dart,
'Tis neatness guides it to the heart;
Let neatness then, and beauty strive
To keep a wav'ring flame alive.

'Tis harder far (you'll find it true)
To keep the conquest, than subdue;
Admit us once behind the screen,
What is there farther to be seen?
A newer face may raise the flame,
But every woman is the same.

Then study chiefly to improve
The charm that fix'd your husband's love.
Weigh well his humour. Was it dress
That gave your beauty power to bless?
Pursue it still; be neater seen;
'Tis always frugal to be clean;

So

So shall you keep alive desire,
And time's swift wing shall fan the fire

IN garret high (as stories say)
A Poet sung his tuneful lay;
So soft, so smooth, his verse, you'd swear
Apollo and the muses there;
Thro' all the town his praises rung,
His sonnets at the playhouse sung;
High waving o'er his lab'ring head,
The goddesses Want her pinions spread,
And with poetic fury fir'd,
What Phœbus faintly had inspir'd.

A noble Youth of taste and wit,
Approv'd the sprightly things he writ,
And sought him in his cobweb dome,
Discharge'd his rent and brought him home.

Behold him at the stately board,
Who but the poet and my Lord!
Each day deliciously he dines,
And greedy quaffs the generous wines;
His sides were plump, his skin was sleek,
And plenty wanton'd on his cheek;
Astonish'd at the change so new,
Away th' inspiring goddess flew,

Now,

Now, dropt for politics and news,
Neglected lay the drooping muse,
Unmindful whence his fortune came,
He stifled the poetic flame ;
Nor tale, nor sonnet, for my lady,
Lampoon, nor epigram was ready.

With just contempt his patron saw,
(Resolv'd his bounty to withdraw)
And thus, with anger in his look,
The late-repenting fool bespoke.

Blind to the good that courts the grown,
Whence has the sun of favour shone ?
Delighted with thy tuneful art,
Esteem was growing in my heart,
But idly thou reject'st the charm,
That gave it birth, and kept it warm.

Unthinking fools, alone despise
The arts that taught them first to rise.



F A B. VI.

The WOLF, the SHEEP, and the LAMB.

DUTY demands, the parent's voice
Should sanctify the daughter's choice ;
In that is due obedience shown ;
To chuse belongs to her alone.

May horror seize his midnight hour,
Who builds upon a parent's pow'r,
And claims by purchase vile and base,
The loathing maid for his embrace ;
Hence virtue sickens ; and the breast,
Where peace had built her downy nest,
Becomes the troubled seat of care,
And pines with anguish, and despair.

A Wolf, rapacious, rough, and bold,
Whose nightly plunders thin'd the fold,
Contemplating his ill-spent life,
And cloy'd with thefts, would take a wife.

His

His purpose known, the savage race,
In num'rous crowds, attend the place ;
For why, a mighty wolf he was,
And held dominion in his jaws.
Her fav'rite whelp each mother brought
And humbly his alliance sought ;
But cold by age, or else too nice,
None found acceptance in his eyes.
It happen'd as at early dawn
He solitarily cross'd the lawn,
Stray'd from the fold, a sportive lamb
Skip'd wanton by her fleecy dam ;
When Cupid, foe to man and beast,
Discharge'd an arrow at his breast.

The tim'rous breed the robber knew,
And trembling o'er the meadow flew ;
Their nimblest speed the wolf o'ertook,
And courteous, thus the dam bespoke.

Stay, fairest, and suspend your fear,
Trust me, no enemy is near ;
These jaws, in slaughter oft imbru'd,
At length have known enough of blood ;
And kinder bus'ness brings me now,
Vanquish'd, at beauty's feet to bow.

You

You have a daughter——Sweet, forgive
A Wolf's address——in her I live ;
Love from her eyes like light'ning came,
And set my marrow all on flame ;
Let your consent confirm my choice,
And ratify our nuptial joys.

Me ample wealth and pow'r attend,
Wide o'er the plains my realms extend ;
What midnight robber dare invade
The fold, if I the guard am made ?
At home the shepherd's curr may sleep,
While I secure his master's sheep.

Discourse like this, attention claim'd ;
Grandeur the mother's breast inflam'd ;
Now fearless by his side she walk'd,
Of settlements and jointures talk'd ;
Propos'd, and doubled her demands
Of flow'ry fields, and turnip-lands.
The wolf agrees. Her bosom swells ;
To Miss her happy fate she tells ;
And of the grand alliance vain,
Contemns her kindred of the plain.

The loathing lamb with horror hears
And wearies out her dam with pray'rs :

But

But all in vain ; mamma best knew
What unexperience'd girls should do ;
So, to the neigh'bring meadow carry'd,
A formal ass the couple marry'd.
Torn from the tyrant mother's side,
The trembler goes, a victim-bride,
Reluctant meets the rude embrace,
And bleats among the howling race.
With horror oft her eyes behold
Her murder'd kindred of the fold ;
Each day a sister-lamb is serv'd ;
And at the Glutton's table carv'd,
The crashing bones he grinds for food,
And flakes his thirst with streaming blood.

Love, who the cruel mind detests,
And lodges but in gentle breasts,
Was now no more. Enjoyment past,
The savage hunger'd for the feast ;
Yet (as we find in human race,
A mask conceals the villain's face)
Justice must authorize the treat ;
Till then he long'd but durst not eat.

As forth he walk'd in quest of prey,
The hunters met him on the way ;

Fea^r

Fear wings his flight; the marsh he sought
The snuffing dogs are set at fault.
His stomach baulk'd, now hunger gnaws;
Howling, he grinds his empty jaws;
Food must be had, and lamb is nigh;
His maw invokes the fraudulent lie,
Is this (dissembling rage, he cry'd)
The gentle virtue of a bride?
That, leagu'd with man's destroying race,
She sets her husband for the chace?
By treach'ry prompts the noisy hound
To scent his footsteps on the ground?
Thou trait'refs vile! for this thy blood
Shall glut my rage, and dye the wood?
So saying, on the Lamb he flies,
Beneath his jaws the victim dies.

D

F A B.



F A B. VII.

The GOOSE and the SWANS.

I HATE the face, however fair,
 That carries an affected air;
 The lisping tone, the shape constrain'd,
 The study'd look, the passion feign'd,
 Are fopperies, which only tend
 To injure what they strive to mend.

With what superior grace enchants
 The face, which nature's pencil paints!
 Where eyes unexercised in art,
 Glow with the meaning of the heart!
 Where freedom, and good-humour sit,
 And easy gaiety, and wit!
 Though perfect beauty be not there,
 The master lines, the finish'd air,
 We catch from every look delight,
 And grow enamour'd at the sight:

For

For beauty though we all approve,
Excites our wonder more than love ;
While the agreeable strikes sure,
And gives the wounds we cannot cure.

Why then, my Amoret, this care,
That forms you, in effect, less fair ?
If nature on your cheek bestows
A bloom, that emulates the rose,
Or from some heav'nly image drew
A form Apelles never knew,
Your ill-judg'd aid will you impart,
And spoil by meretricious art ?
Or had you, nature's error, come
Abortive from the mother's womb,
Your forming care she still rejects,
Which only heightens her defects.
When such, of glitt'ring jewels proud,
Still press the foremost in the croud,
At ev'ry public shew are seen,
With look awry, and aukward mien,
The gaudy dress attracts the eye,
And magnifies deformity.

Nature may undergo her part,
But seldom wants the help of art ;

Trust her, she is your surest friend,
Nor made your form for you to mend.

A Goose, affected empty, vain,
The shrillest of the cackling train,
With proud and elevated crest,
Precedence claim'd above the rest.

Says she, I laugh at human race,
Who say, geese hobble in their pace;
Look here!—the scandalous lie detect;
Not haughty man is so erect.

That peacock yonder! Lord, how vain
The creatures of his gaudy train!

If both were stript, I'd pawn my word,
A goose would be the finer bird.

Nature to hide her own defects,
Her bungled work with fin'ry decks;
Were geese set off with half that show,
Would men admire the peacock? No.

Thus vaunting cross the mead she stalks,
The cackling breed attend her walks;
'The sun shot down his noon-tide beams,
The Swans were sporting in the streams;
'Their snowy plumes, and stately pride,
Provok'd her spleen. Why there, she cried,
Again,

Again, what arrogance we see!——
Those creatures! how they mimic me!
Shall every fowl the waters skim,
Because we geese are known to swim!
Humility they soon shall learn,
And their own emptiness discern.

So saying, with extended wings,
Lightly upon the wave she springs;
Her bosom swells, she spreads her plumes,
And the swan's stately crest assumes.
Contempt and mockery ensu'd,
And bursts of laughter shook the flood.

A swan, superior to the rest,
Sprung forth, and thus the fool address'd.

Conceited thing, elate with pride!
Thy affectation all deride;
These airs thy awkwardness impart,
And shew thee plainly as thou art.
Among thy equals of the flock,
Thou had'st escap'd the public mock,
And as thy parts to good conduce,
Been deem'd an honest, hobbling goose.
Learn hence, to study wisdom's rules;
Know, foppery's the pride of fools;
And striving nature to conceal,
You only her defects reveal.



F A B. VIII.

The LAWYER *and* JUSTICE.

LOVE! thou divinest good below,
 Thy pure delights few mortals know!
 Our rebel hearts thy sway disown,
 While tyrant lust usurps thy throne.

The bounteous God of nature made
 The sexes for each other's aid,
 Their mutual talents to employ,
 To lessen ills, and heighten joy.
 To weaker woman he assign'd
 That soft'ning gentleness of mind.
 That can, by sympathy, impart
 It's likeness, to the roughest heart.
 Her eyes with magic pow'r endu'd,
 To fire the dull, and awe the rude.
 His rosy fingers on her face
 Shed lavish ev'ry blooming grace,
 And stamp'd (perfection to display)
 His mildest image on her clay.

Man,

Man, active, resolute, and bold,
He fashion'd in a different mould,
With useful arts his mind inform'd,
His breast with nobler passions warm'd;
He gave him knowledge, taste, and sense,
And courage, for the fair's defence.
Her frame, resistless to each wrong,
Demands protection from the strong;
To man she flies, when fear alarms,
And claims the temple of his arms.

By nature's Author thus declar'd
The woman's sov'reign, and her guard,
Shall man, by treach'rous wiles, invade
The weakness he was meant to aid?
While beauty, given to inspire
Protecting love, and soft desire,
Lights up a wild fire in the heart,
And to it's own breast points the dart,
Becomes the spoiler's base pretence
To triumph over innocence.

The wolf, that tears the tim'rous sheep,
Was never set the fold to keep;
Nor was the tyger, or the pard,
Meant the benighted trav'ler's guard;

But

But man, the wildest beast of prey,
Wears friendship's semblance, to betray;
His strength against the weak employs,
And where he should protect, destroys.

PAST twelve o'clock, the watchman cry'd;
His brief the studious Lawyer ply'd;
The all-prevailing fee lay nigh,
The earnest of to-morrow's lie.
Sudden the furious winds arise,
The jarring casement shatter'd flies;
The doors admit a hollow sound,
And rattling from their hinges bound;
When Justice, in a blaze of light,
Reveal'd her radiant form to sight.

The wretch with thrilling horror shook,
Loose every joint, and pale his look;
Not having seen her in the courts,
Or found her mention'd in reports,
He ask'd, with fault'ring tongue, her name,
Her errand there, and whence she came?

Sternly the white-rob'd shade reply'd,
(A crimson glow her visage dy'd),
Can'st thou be doubtful who I am?
Is Justice grown so strange a name?

Were

Were not your courts for Justice rais'd?
'Twas there, of old, my altars blaz'd:
My guardian thee I did elect,
My sacred temple to protect,
That thou, and all thy venal tribe
Should spurn the goddess for the bribe.
Aloud the ruin'd client cries,
Justice has neither ears, nor eyes:
In foul alliance with the bar,
'Gainst me the judge denounces war,
And rarely issues his decree,
But with intent to baffle me.

She paus'd. Her breast with fury burn'd.
The trembling Lawyer thus return'd.

I own the charge is justly laid,
And weak th' excuse that can be made;
Yet search the spacious globe, and see
If all mankind are not like me.

The gown-man, skill'd in Romish lies,
By faith's false glass deludes our eyes;
O'er conscience rides without controul,
And robs the man, to save his soul.

The Doctor, with important face,
By sly design, mistakes the case;

Prescribes

Prescribes and spins out the disease,
To trick the patient of his fees.

The soldier, rough with many a scar,
And red with slaughter, leads the war;
If he a nation's trust betray,
The foe has offer'd double pay.

When vice o'er all mankind prevails,
And weighty int'rest turns the scales,
Must I be better than the rest,
And harbour Justice in my breast?
On one side only take the fee,
Content with poverty and thee?

Thou blind to sense and vile of mind,
Th' exasperated Shade rejoin'd,
If virtue from the world is flown,
Will others faults excuse thy own?
For sickly souls the priest was made;
Physicans for the body's aid;
The soldier guarded liberty;
Man, woman, and the lawver me.
If all are faithless to their trust,
They leave not thee the less unjust.
Henceforth your pleadings I disclaim,
And bar the sanction of my name;

Within

Within your courts it shall be read,
That Justice from the law is fled.

She spoke; and hid in shades her face,
'Till HARDWICK sooth'd her into grace.



F A B. IX.

The FARMER, be SPANIEL, and the CAT.

WHY knits my dear her angry brow?
 What rude offence alarms you now?
 I said, that Delia's fair, 'tis true,
 But did I say she equal'd you?
 Can't I another's face commend,
 Or to her virtues be a friend,
 But instantly your forehead frowns,
 As if her merit lessen'd yours?
 From female envy never free,
 All must be blind because you see.

Survey the gardens, fields, and bow'rs,
 The buds, the blossoms, and the flow'rs.
 Then tell me where the wood-bine grows,
 That vies in sweetness with the rose?
 Or where the lily's snowy white,
 That throws such beauties on the sight?

Yet

Yet folly is it to declare,
That these are neither sweet, nor fair.
The crystal shines with fainter rays,
Before the di'monds brighter blaze ;
And fops will say, the di'mond dies
Before the lustre of your eyes :
But I, who deal in truth, deny
That neither shine when you are by.

When zephyrs o'er the blossoms stray,
And sweets along the air convey,
Shan't I the fragrant breeze inhale,
Because you breathe a sweeter gale ?

Sweet are the flow'rs, that deck the field ;
Sweet is the smell the blossoms yield ;
Sweet is the summer gale that blows ;
And sweet, tho' sweeter you, the rose.

Shall envy then torment your breast,
If you are lovelier than the rest ?
For while I give to each her due,
By praising them I flatter you ;
And praising most, I still declare
You fairest, where the rest are fair.

AS at his board a farmer late,
Replenish'd by his homely treat,
His fav'rite spaniel near him stood,
And with his master shar'd the food;
The crackling bones his jaws devour'd,
His lapping tongue the trenchers scour'd;
Till sated now, supine he lay,
And snor'd the rising fumes away.

The hungry cat, in turn, drew near,
And humbly crav'd a servant's share;
Her modest worth the Master kne w
And strait the fat'ning morsel threw:
Enrage'd, the snarling cur awoke,
And thus with spiteful envy, spoke.

They only claim a right to eat,
Who earn by services their mea t;
Me, zeal and industry inflame
To scour the fields, and spring the game;
Or, plunged in the wintry wave,
For man the wounded bird to save.
With watchful diligence I keep,
From prowling wolves, his fleecy sheep;
At home his midnight hours secure,
And drive the robber from the door.

For

For this, his breast with kindness glows :
For this, his hand the food bestows ;
And shall thy indolence impart
A warmer friendship to his heart,
That thus he robs me of my due,
To pamper such vile things as you ?

I own (with meekness puss reply'd)
Superior merit on your side ;
Nor does my breast with envy swell,
To find it recompence'd so well ;
Yet I, in what my nature can,
Contribute to the good of man,
Whose claws destroy the pilf'ring mouse ?
Who drives the vermin from the house ;
Or, watchful for the lab'ring swain,
From lurking rats secure the grain ?
From hence, if he rewards bestow,
Why should your heart with gall o'erflow ?
Why pine my happiness to see,
Since there's enough for you and me ?

Thy words are just, the Farmer cry'd
And spurn'd the snarler from his side.



F A B. X.

The SPIDER, and the BEE.

THE nymph, who walks the public streets,
 And sets her cap at all she meets,
 May catch the fool, who turns to stare,
 But men of sense avoid the snare.

As on the margin of the flood,
 With silken line, my Lydia stood,
 I smil'd to see the pains you took,
 To cover o'er the fraudulent hook.
 A long the forest as we stray'd,
 You saw the boy his lime twigs spread ;
 Guess'd you the reason of his fear,
 Lest, heedless, we approach'd too near ?
 For as behind the bush we lay,
 The linnet flutter'd on the spray.

Needs there such caution to delude
 The scaly fry, and feather'd brood ?
 And think you with inferior art,
 To captivate the human heart ?

The

The maid, who modestly conceals
Her beauties, while she hides, reveals,
Give but a glimpse, and fancy draws
Whate'er the Grecian Venus was.
From Eve's first fig-leaf to brocade,
All dress was meant for fancy's aid,
Which evermore delighted dwells
On what the bashful nymph conceals.

When Celia struts in man's attire,
She shews too much to raise desire;
But from the hoop's bewitching round,
Her very shoe, has pow'r to wound.

The roving eye, the bosom bare,
The forward laugh, the wanton air
May catch the fop; for gudgeons strike,
At the bare hook, and bait, alike;
While salmon play regardless by,
Till art, like nature, forms the fly.

BENEATH a peasant's homely thatch
A Spider long had held her watch;
From morn to night, with restless care,
She spun her web, and wove her snare.
Within the limits of her reign,
Lay many a heedless captive slain,

Or flutt'ring, struggled in the toils,
To burst the chains, and shun her wiles.

A straying Bee, that perch'd hard by
Beheld her with disdainful eye.

And thus began. Mean thing, give o'er,
And lay thy slender threads no more;
A thoughtless fly or two, at most

Is all the conquest thou can'st boast
For bees of sense thy arts evade,
We see so plain the nets are laid.

The gaudy tulip, that displays
Her spreading foliage to gaze;
That points her charms at all she sees,
And yields to every wanton breeze.
Attracts not me; where blushing grows,
Guarded with thorns, the modest rose,
Enamour'd, round and round I fly,
Or on her fragrant bosom lie:
Reluctant, she my ardour meets,
And bashful, renders up her sweets.

To wiser heads attention lend,
And learn this lesson from a friend.
She, who with modesty retires,
Adds fuel to her lover's fires,
While such incautious jilts as you,
By folly your own schemes undo.



F A B. XI.

The YOUNG LION and the APE.

TIS true, I blame your lover's choice,
 Though flatter'd by the public voice,
 And peevish grow, and sick, to hear
 His exclamations, O how fair!
 I listen not to wild delights,
 And transports of expected nights;
 What is to me your hoard of charms?
 The whiteness of your neck and arms?
 Needs there no acquisition more,
 To keep contention from the door?
 Yes; pass a fortnight, and you'll find,
 All beauty cloy, but of the mind.

Sense, and good humour ever prove
 The surest cords to fasten love.
 Yet, Phillis, simplest of your sex,
 You never think but to perplex;
 Coquetting it with every ape,
 That struts abroad in human shape;

Not

Not that the coxcomb is your taste,
But that it stings your lover's breast ;
To-morrow you resign the sway,
Prepar'd to honour and obey,
The tyrant-mistress change for life,
To the submission of a wife.

Your follies, if you can, suspend,
And learn instruction from a friend.

Reluctant, hear the first address,
Think often, ere you answer, yes ;
But once resolv'd, throw off disguise,
And wear your wishes in your eyes,
With caution ev'ry look forbear,
That might create one jealous fear,
A lover's ripening hopes confound,
Or give the gen'rous breast a wound.
Contemn the girlish arts to tease,
Nor use your pow'r, unless to please ;
For fools alone with rigour sway,
When soon or late they must obey.

THE king of brutes, in life's decline,
Resolv'd dominion to resign ;
The beasts were summon'd to appear,
And bend before the royal heir.

They

They came ; a day was fix'd ; the crowd
Before their future monarch bow'd.

A dapper Monkey pert and vain,
Step'd forth, and thus address'd the train
Why cringe my friends with slavish awe
Before this pageant king of straw ?

Shall we anticipate the hour,
And ere we feel it, own his pow'r,
The counsels of experience prize,
I know the maxims of the wise ;
Subjection let us cast away,

And live the monarchs of to-day ;
'Tis ours the vacant hand to spurn,
And play the tyrant each in turn.
So shall he right from wrong discern,
And mercy from oppression learn ;
At others woes be taught to melt,
And lothe the ills himself has felt.

He spoke ; his bosom swell'd with pride,
The youthful Lion thus reply'd.

What madness prompts thee to provoke
My wrath, and dare th' impending stroke ?
Thou wretched fool ! can wrongs impart
Compassion to the feeling heart ?

Or

Or teach the grateful breast to glow,
The hand to give, or eye to flow,
Learn'd in the practice of their schools,
From women thou hast drawn thy rules;
To them return; in such a cause,
From only such expect applause;
The partial sex I don't condemn,
For liking those who copy them.

Would'st thou the gen'rous lion bind,
By kindness bribe him to be kind.
Good offices their likeness get,
And payment lessens not the debt;
With multiplying hand he gives
The good, from others he receives;
Or, for the bad makes fair return,
And pays with int'rest, scorn for scorn.



F A B. XII.

The COLT, and the FARMER.

TELL me, Corinna, if you can,
 Why so averſe, ſo coy to man ?
 Did nature, lavish of her care,
 From her beſt pattern form you fair,
 That you, ungrateful to her cauſe,
 Should mock her gifts, and ſpurn her laws ?
 And, miſer-like, with-hold that ſtore,
 Which, by imparting, bleſſes more ?

Beauty's a gift, by heaven aſſign'd
 The portion of the female kind ;
 For this the yielding maid demands
 Protection at her lover's hands ;
 And though by waſting years it fade,
 Remembrance tells him, once 'twas paid.

And will you then this wealth conceal,
 For age to ruſt, or time to ſteal ?
 The ſummer of your youth to rove,
 A ſtranger to the joys of love ?

Then,

Then, when life's winter hastens on,
 And youth's fair heritage is gone,
 Dow'rless the courtsome peasant's arms,
 To guard your wither'd age from harms,
 No gratitude to warm his breast,
 For blooming beauty once possess'd;
 How will you curse that stubborn pride,
 Which drove your bark across the tide,
 And sailing before folly's wind,
 Left sense and happiness behind?

Corinna, lest these whims prevail,
 To such as you, I write my tale.

A Colt, for blood, and mettled speed,
 The choicest of the running breed,
 Of youthful strength, and beauty vain,
 Refus'd subjection to the rein.
 In vain the groom's officious skill
 Oppos'd his pride, and check'd his will;
 In vain the master's forming care
 Restrain'd with threats, or sooth'd with
 pray'r;
 Of freedom proud, and scorning man,
 Wild o'er the spacious plains he ran.

Where'er

Where e'er luxuriant nature spread
Her flow'ry carpet o'er the mead,
Or bubbling streams soft-gliding pass
To cool and freshen up the grass,
Disdaining bounds, he crop'd the blade,
And wanton'd in the spoil he made.

In plenty thus the summer pas'd,
Revolving winter came at last;
The trees no more a shelter yield,
The verdure withers from the field,
Perpetual snows invest the ground,
In icy chains the streams are bound,
Cold, nipping winds, and rattling hail,
His lank, unshelter'd sides assail.
As round he cast his rueful eyes,
He saw the thatch'd-roof cottage rise;
The prospect touch'd his heart with cheer;
And promis'd kind deliv'rance near.
A stable, erst his scorn and hate,
Was now become his wish'd retreat;
His passion cool, his pride forgot,
A Farmer's welcome yard he sought.

The master saw his woeful plight,
His limbs that totter'd with his weight,

F

And,

And, friendly, to the stable led,
And saw him litter'd, dress'd, and fed.
In slothful ease, all night he lay ;
The servants rose at break of day ;
The market calls. Along the road,
His back must bear the pond'rous load ;
In vain he struggles, or complains,
Incessant blows reward his pains.
To-morrow varies but his toil ;
Chain'd to the plough, he breaks the soil ;
While scanty meals at night repay
The painful labours of the day.

Subdu'd by toil, with anguish rent,
His self-upbraidings found a vent.
Wretch that I am ! he sighing said,
By arrogance and folly led,
Had but my restive youth been brought
To learn the lesson nature taught,
Then had I, like my sires of yore,
The prize from every courser bore ;
While man bestow'd rewards and praise,
And females crown'd my latter days.
Now lasting servitude's my lot,
My birth condemn'd, my speed forgot,
Doom'd am I, for my pride to bear
A living death, from year to year.



F A B. XIII.

The OWL, and the NIGHTINGALE.

TO know the mistress' humour right
See if her maids are clean and tight;
If Betty waits without her stays,
She copies but her lady's ways.
When Miss comes in with boist'rous shout,
And drops no curt'sy going out,
Depend upon't, mamma is one,
Who reads, or drinks too much alone.
If bottled beer her thirst assuage,
She feels enthusiastic rage,
And burns with ardour to inherit
The gifts, and workings of the spirit.
If learning crack her giddy brains,
No remedy, but death remains.
Sum up the various ills of life,
And all are sweet, to such a wife.
At home, superior wit she vaunts,
And twits her husband with his wants;

Her ragged offspring all around,
 Like pigs, are wallowing on the ground;
 Impatient ever of controul,
 She knows no order, but of foul;
 With books her litter'd floor is spread,
 Of nameless authors, never read;
 Foul linen, petticoats, and lace
 Fill up the intermediate space.
 Abroad, at visitings, her tongue
 Is never still, and always wrong;
 All meanings she defines away,
 And stands, with truth and sense, at bay.

If e'er she meets a gentle heart,
 Skill'd in the housewife's useful art,
 Who makes her family her care,
 And builds contentment's temple there,
 She starts at such mistakes in nature,
 And cries, Lord help us! what a creature

Melissa, if the moral strike,
 You'll find the fable not unlike.

AN Owl, puff'd up with self conceit,
 Lov'd learning better than his meat;
 Old manuscripts he treasur'd up,
 And rummag'd every grocer's shop;

At pastry-cooks was known to ply,
And strip, for science, every pye.
For modern poetry, and wit,
He had read all that Blackmore writ;
So intimate with Curl was grown,
His learned treasures were his own;
To all his authors had access,
And sometimes would correct the press.
In logic he acqui'd such knowledge,
You'd swear him fellow of a college.
Alike to every art, and science,
His daring genius bid defiance,
And swallow'd wisdom, with that haste,
That eits do custards at a feast.

Within the shelter of a wood,
One ev'ning, as he musing stood,
Hard by, upon a leafy spray,
A Nightingale began his lay.
Sudden he starts, with anger stung,
And screeching interrupts the song.
Pert, busy thing, thy airs give o'er,
And let my contemplations soar.
What is the music of thy voice,
But jarring dissonance and noise?

Be wise. True harmony, thou'lt find
Not in the throat, but in the mind;
By empty chirping not attain'd
But by laborious study gain'd.
Go, read the authors Pope explodes,
Fathom the depth of Cibber's odes,
With modern plays improve thy wit,
Read all the learning, Henley writ;
And if thou needs must sing, sing then,
And emulate the ways of men;
So shalt thou grow, like me refin'd,
And bring improvement to thy kind.

Thou wretch, the little Warbler cry'd,
Made up of ignorance, and pride,
Ask all the birds, and they'll declare,
A greater blockhead wings not air.
Read o'er thyself, thy talents scan,
Science was only meant for man.
No senseless authors me molest,
I mind the duties of my nest;
With careful wing, protect my young,
And cheer their ev'nings with a song;
Make short the weary trav'ler's way,
And warble in the poet's lay.

Thus,

FABLES.

55

Thus, following nature, and her laws,
From men, and birds I claim applause;
While, nurs'd in pedantry and sloth,
An Owl is scorn'd alike by both.

F A B.



F A B. XIV.

The SPARROW, and the DOVE.

IT was, as learn'd traditions say,
 Upon an April's blithsome day,
 When pleasure, ever on the wing,
 Return'd, companion of the spring,
 And chear'd the birds with am'rous heat,
 Instructing little hearts to beat ;
 A sparrow, frolic, gay, and young,
 Of bold address, and flippant tongue,
 Just left his lady of a night,
 Like him, to follow new delight.

The youth, of many a conquest vain,
 Flew off to seek the chirping train ;
 The chirping train he quickly found,
 And with a saucy ease, bow'd round.

For every sine his bosom burns,
 And this, and that he woos by turns ;
 And here a sigh, and there a bill,
 And here—those eyes, so form'd to kill !

And

And now with ready tongue, he strings
Unmeaning, soft, resistless things ;
With vows, and dem-me's skill'd to woo
As other pretty fellows do.
Not that he thought this short essay
A prologue needful to his play ;
No, trust me, says our learned letter,
He knew the virtuous sex much better ;
But these he held as specious arts,
To shew his own superior parts,
The form of decency to shield,
And give a just pretence to yield.

Thus finishing his courtly play,
He mark'd the fav'rite of a day ;
With careless impudence drew near,
And whisper'd Hebrew in her ear ;
A hint, which like the masons sign,
The conscious can alone divine.

The flutt'ring nymph, expert at feigning,
Cry'd, Sir !—pray Sir, explain your meaning
Go prate to thole, that may endure ye—
To me 'tis rudeness !—I'll assure ye !—
Then off she glided, like a swallow,
As saying—you guess where to follow.

To

To such as know the party set,
'Tis needless to declare they met ;
The parson's barn, as authors mention,
Confess'd the fair had apprehension,
Her honour there secure from stain,
She held all farther trifling vain,
No more affected to be coy,
But rush'd licentious, on the joy

Hist, love !--the male companion cry'd,
Retire a while, I fear we're spy'd.
Nor was the caution vain ; he saw
A Turtle, rustling in the straw,
While o'er her callow brood she hung,
And fondly thus address'd her young.

Ye tender objects of my care !
Peace, peace, ye little helpless pair ;
Anon he comes, your gentle sire,
And brings you all your hearts require.
For us, his infants, and his bride,
For us, with only love to guide,
Our lord assumes an eagle's speed,
And like a lion, dares to bleed.
Nor yet by wint'ry skies confin'd,
He mounts upon the rudest wind,

From

From danger tears the vital spoil,
And with affection sweetens toil,
Ah cease, too vent'rous! cease to dare,
In thine, our dearer safety spare!
From him, ye cruel falcons, stray,
And turn, ye fowlers, far away!

Should I survive to see the day,
That tears me from myself away,
That cancels all that heav'n could give,
The life, by which alone I live,
Alas, how more than lost were I,
Who, in the thought, already die!

Ye pow'rs, whom men, and birds obey,
Great rulers of your creatures, say,
Why mourning comes, by bliss convey'd,
And ev'n the sweets of love allay'd?
Where grows enjoyment, tall, and fair,
Around it twines entangling care;
While fear for what our souls possess,
Enervates ev'ry pow'r to bless;
Yet friendship forms the bliss above,
And, life! what art thou, without love?

Our hero, who had hear'd apart,
Felt something moving in his heart,

But

But quickly, with disdain, suppress'd
The virtue, rising in his breast;
And first he feign'd to laugh aloud,
And next, approaching, smil'd and bow'd.

Madam, you must not think me rude;
Good manners never can intrude;
I vow I come thro' pure good nature —
(Upon my soul a charming creature)
Are these the comforts of a wife?
This careful, cloistered, mooping life?
No doubt, that odious thing call'd duty,
Is a sweet province for a beauty.
Thou pretty ignorance! thy will
Is measur'd to thy want of skill;
That good old-fashion'd dame thy mother,
Has taught thy infant years no other:—
The greatest ill in the creation,
Is sure the want of education.

But think ye?—tell me without feigning,
Have all these charms no farther meaning?
Dame nature, if you don't forget her,
Might teach your Ladyship much better.
For shame, reject this mean employment;
Enter the world, and taste enjoyment;

Where.

Where time by circling bliss we measure;
Beauty was form'd alone for pleasure;
Come prove the blessing, follow me,
Be wise, be happy, and be free.

Kind Sir, reply'd our matron chaste,
Your zeal seems pretty much in haste;
I own, the fondness to be blest
Is a deep thirst in every breast;
Of blessings too I have my store,
Yet quarrel not, should heav'n give more,
Then prove the change to be expedient,
And think me, Sir, your most obedient.

Here turning, as to one inferior,
Our gallant spoke, and smil'd superior.
Methinks, to quit your boasted station
Requires a world of hesitation;
Where brats and bonds, are held a blessing,
The case, I doubt, is past redressing.
Why, child, suppose the joys I mention,
Were the mere fruits of my invention,
You've cause sufficient for your carriage,
In flying from the curse of marriage;
That sly decoy, with vary'd snares,
That takes your widgeons in by pairs;

Alike to husband, and to wife,
 The cure of love and bane of life ;
 The only method of forecasting,
 To make misfortune firm and lasting ;
 The sin by heaven's peculiar sentence,
 Unpardon'd, thro' a life's repentance.
 It is the double snake that weds
 A common tail to diff'rent heads,
 That lead the carcase still astray,
 By dragging each a diff'rent way.
 Of all the ills that may attend me,
 From marriage mighty gods defend me !
 Give me frank nature's wild demesne,
 And boundless tract of air serene,
 Where fancy ever wing'd for change,
 Delights to sport, delights to range ;
 There Liberty ! to thee is owing
 Whate'er of bliss is worth bestowing ;
 Delights still vary'd, and divine,
 Sweet goddess of the hills are thine.

What say you now, you pretty pink you ?
 Have I, for once spoke reason, think you ?
 You take me now for no romancer—
 Come never study for an answer.

Away

Away cast every care behind ye,
And fly where joy alone shall find ye,
Soft yet, return'd our female fencer,
A question more, or so——and then Sir,
You've rally'd me with sense exceeding,
With much fine wit, and better breeding,
But pray, Sir, how do you contrive it?
Do those of your world never wive it?
“No, no,” How then? “Why dare I tell,
“What does the bus'ness full as well.”
Do you ne'er love? “An hour at leisure.”
Have you no friendships? “Yes, for pleasure.”

No care for little ones? “We get 'em,
“The rest the mothers mind, and let 'em.”

Thou wretch, rejoin'd the kindling Dove,
Quite lost to life, as lost to love!
Whene'er misfortune comes, how just!
And come misfortune surely must:
In the dread season of dismay,
In that, your hour of trial, say,
Who then shall prop your sinking heart?
Who bear affliction's weightier part?

Say, when the black-brow'd welken bends
And winter's gloomy form impends,
To mourning turns all transient cheer,
And blasts the melancholy year;
For times, at no persuasion, stay,
Nor vice can find perpetual May;
'Then where's that tongue, by folly fed,
That soul of pertness, whither fled?
All shrunk within thy lonely nest,
Forlorn abandon'd and unblest'd;
No friends by cordial bonds ally'd,
Shall seek thy cold, unfocial side;
No chirping prattlers to delight;
Shall turn the long enduring night;
No bride her words of balm impart,
And warm thee at her constant heart.
Freedom, restrain'd by reason's force,
Is as the sun's unvarying course,
Benignly active sweetly bright,
Affording warmth, affording light;
But torn from virtue's sacred rules,
Becomes a comet, gaz'd by fools,
Foreboding cares and storms and strife
And fraught with all the plagues of life,

Thou

Thou fool ! by union every creature
Subsists through universal nature ;
And this, to beings void of mind,
Is wedlock of a meaner kind.

While womb'd in space, primæval clay
A yet unfashion'd embryo lay,
The source of endless good above
Shot down his spark of kindling love ;
Touch'd by the all-enlivening flame,
Then motion first exulting came ;
Each atom sought its separate class,
Through many a fair, enamour'd mass ;
Love cast the central charm around,
And with eternal nuptials bound.
Then form, and order o'er the sky,
First train'd their bridal pomp on high ;
The sun display'd his orb to fight,
And burnt with hymeneal light.

Hence nature's virgin-womb conceiv'd,
And with the genial burden heav'd ;
Forth came the oak, her first born heir
And scal'd the breathing steep of air ;
Then infant stems of various use,
Imbib'd her soft maternal juice ;

The flow'rs, in early bloom disclos'd :
Upon her fragrant breast repos'd ;
Within her warm embraces grew
A race of endless form and hue ;
Then pour'd her lesser offspring round,
And fondly cloath'd their parent ground,
Nor here alone the virtue reign'd
By matter's cumb'ring form detain'd,
But thence subliming and refin'd,
Aspir'd and reach'd its kindred mind.
Caught in the fond, celestial fire,
'The mind perceiv'd unknown desire,
And now with kind effusion flow'd,
And now with cordial ardours glow'd,
Beheld the sympathetic fair,
And lov'd its own resemblance there ;
On all with circling radiance shone,
But cent'ring, fix'd on one alone ;
There clasp'd the heav'n appointed wife,
And doubled every joy of life.

Here ever blessing, ever blest'd,
Resides this beauty of the breast,
As from his palace here the god
Still beams effulgent bliss abroad.

Here

Here gems his own eternal round,
The ring, by which the world is bound,
Here bids his feat of empire grow,
And builds his little heav'n below.

The bridal partners thus ally'd,
And thus in sweet accordance ty'd,
One body, heart and spirit live,
Enrich'd by every joy they give,
Like echo from her vocal hold,
Return'd in music twenty-fold.
Their union firm, and undecay'd,
Nor time can shake, nor pow'r invade,
But as the stem and scion stand,
Ingras'd by a skillful hand,
They check the tempest's wintry rage,
And bloom and strengthen into age.
A thousand amities unknown,
And pow'rs, perceiv'd by love alone,
Endearing looks, and chaste desire,
Fan, and support the mutual fire;
Whose flame, perpetual, as refin'd,
Is fed by an immortal mind.

Nor yet the nuptial sanction ends,
Like Nile it opens, and descends,

Which

Which, by apparent windings led,
We trace to its celestial head.
The fire, first springing from above,
Becomes the source of life and love,
And gives his filial heir to flow,
In fondacts down on sons below:
Thus roll'd in one continu'd tide,
To time's extremest verge they glide,
While kindred streams, on either hand,
Branch forth in blessings o'er the land,
Thee, wretch! no lisping babe shall name,
No late-returning brother claim,
No kinsman on thy road rejoice,
No sister greet thy ent'ring voice,
With partial eyes no parents see,
And bless their years restor'd in thee.
In age rejected, or declin'd,
An alien, ev'n among thy kind,
The partner of thy scorn'd embrace,
Shall play the wanton in thy face,
Each spark unplume thy little pride,
All friendship fly thy faithless side,
Thy name, shall like thy carcass rot,
In sickness spurn'd, in death forgot.

All-giving pow'r ! great source of life
O hear the parent ! hear the wife !
That life thou lendest from above,
Though little, make it large in love ;
O bid my feeling heart expand
To ev'ry claim, on ev'ry hand ;
To those, from whom my days I drew,
To these, in whom those days renew,
To all my kin, however wide,
In cordial warmth, as blood ally'd,
To friends, with steely fetters twin'd,
And to the cruel, not unkind !

But chief, the lord of my desire,
My life, myself, my soul, my fire,
Friends, children, all that wish can claim,
Chaste passion clasp, and rapture name ;
O spare him, spare him, gracious pow'r !
O give him to my latest hour !
Let me my length of life employ,
To give my sole enjoyment joy.
His love, let mutual love excite,
Turn all my cares to his delight,
And every needless blessing spare,
Wherein my darling wants a share.

When

When he with graceful action wooes,
And sweetly bills, and fondly cooes,
Ah! deck me, to his eyes alone,
With charms attractive as his own,
And in my circling wings caress'd,
Give all the lover to my breast.
Then in our chaste, connubial bed,
My bosom pillow'd for his head,
His eyes with blissful slumber close,
And watch, with me, my lord's repose,
Your peace around his temples twine,
And love him, with a love like mine.

And, for I know his gen'rous flame,
Beyond whate'er my sex can claim,
Me too to your protection take,
And spare me for my husband's sake.
Let one unruffled, calm delight,
The loving, and belov'd unite;
One pure desire our bosoms warm
One will direct, one wish inform;
Through life, one mutual aid sustain,
In death, one peaceful grave contain.

While, swelling with the darling theme,
Her accents pour'd an endless stream,

The

The well-known wings a sound impart,
That reach'd her ear, and touch'd her heart;
Quick drop'd the music of her tongue,
And forth, with eager joy, she sprung.
As swift her ent'ring consort flew,
And plum'd, and kindled at the view;
Their wings their souls embracing meet;
Their hearts with answering measure beat;
Half lost in sacred sweets, and bless'd
With raptures felt, but ne'er express'd.
Strait to her humble roof she led
The partner of her spotle's bed;
Her young, a fluttering pair, arise;
Their welcome sparkling in their eyes;
Transported, to their fire they bound.
And hang with speechless action round.
In pleasure wrapt, the parents stand,
And see their little wings expand;
The sire, his life-sustaining prize
To each expecting bill applies,
There fondly pours the wheaten spoil,
With transport giv'n, tho' won with toil;
While, all collected at the sight,
And silent through supreme delight,

The fair high heav'n of bliss beguiles,
And on her lord, and infants smiles.

The sparrow, whose attention hung
Upon the Dove's enchanting tongue;
Of all his little flights disarm'd,
And from himself, by virtue, charm'd,
When now he saw, what only seem'd,
A fact, so late a fable deem'd,
His soul to envy he resign'd,
His hours of folly to the wind,
In secret wish'd a turtle too,
And sighing to himself, withdrew.



F A B. XV.

The FEMALE SEDUCERS.

TIS said of widow, maid and wife,
 That honour is a woman's life;
 Unhappy sex! who only claim
 A being, in the breath of fame,
 Which tainted, not the quick'ning gales,
 That sweep Sabæa's spicy vales,
 Nor all the healing sweets restore,
 That breathe along Arabia's shore.

The trav'ler, if he chance to stray,
 May turn uncur'd to his way;
 Polluted streams again are pure,
 And deepest wounds admit a cure;
 But woman! no redemption knows,
 The wounds of honour never close.

Tho' distant ev'ry hand to guide,
 Nor skill'd on life's tempestuous tide,
 If once her feeble bark recede,
 Or deviate from the course decreed,

In vain she seeks the friendless shore,
Her swifter folly flies before ;
The circling ports against her close,
And shut the wand'rer from repose ;
Till, by conflicting waves oppress'd,
Her found'ring pinnance sinks to rest.

Are there no off'rings to atone
For but a single error ?—None.
Tho' woman is avow'd, of old,
No daughter of celestial mold,
Hertemp'ring not without allay,
And form'd but of the finer clay,
We challenge from the mortal dame
The strength angelic natures claim ;
Nay more ; for sacred stories tell,
That ev'n immortal angels fell.

Whatever fills the teeming sphere
Of humid earth, and ambient air,
With varying elements endu'd,
Was form'd to fall, and rise renew'd.

The stars no fix'd duration know,
Wide oceans ebb, again to flow,
The moon repletes her waning face,
All-beauteous, from her late disgrace,

And

And suns, that mourn approaching night,
Refulgent rise with new-born light.

In vain may death, and time subdue,
While nature mints her race anew,
And holds some vital spark apart,
Like virtue, hid in ev'ry heart;
'Tis hence reviving warmth is seen,
To clothe a naked world in green.
No longer barr'd by winter's cold,
Again the gates of life unfold;
Again each insect tries his wing,
And lifts fresh pinions on the spring;
Again from every latent root
The bladed stem, and tendril shoot,
Exhaling incense to the skies,
Again to perish, and to rise.

And must weak woman then disown
The change, to which a world is prone?
In one meridian brightness shine,
And ne'er like ev'ning sun's decline?
Resolv'd and firm alone?—Is this
What we demand of woman?—Yes.

But should the spark of vestal fire,
In some unguarded hour expire,

Or should the nightly thief invade,
 Hesperia's chaste, and sacred shade,
 Of all the blooming spoils possess'd,
 The dragon honour charm'd to rest,
 Shall virtue's flame no more return?
 No more with virgin splendor burn?
 No more the ravage'd garden blow
 With spring's succeeding blossom?— No.
 Pity may mourn, but not restore,
 And woman falls, to rise no more.

WITHIN this sublunary sphere,
 A country lies——no matter where;
 The clime may readily be found
 By all, who tread poetic ground.
 A stream, call'd life, across it glides,
 And equally the land divides;
 And here, of vice the province lies,
 And there, the hills of virtue rise.

Upon a mountain's airy stand,
 Whose summit look'd to either land,
 An ancient pair their dwelling chose,
 As well for prospect, as repose;

For

For mutual faith they long were fam'd,
And Temp'rance, and Religion nam'd.

A num'rous progeny divine,
Confess'd the honours of their line;
But in a little daughter fair,
Was center'd more than half their care;
For heav'n, to gratulate her birth,
Gave signs of future joy to earth;
White was the robe this infant wore,
And Chastity the name she bore.

As now the maid in stature grew,
(A flow'r just opening to the view)
Oft thro' her native lawns she stray'd,
And wrestling with the lambskins play'd;
Her looks diffusive sweets bequeath'd,
The breeze grew purer as she breath'd,
The morn her radiant blush assum'd,
The spring with earlier fragrance bloom'd,
And nature yearly took delight,
Like her to dress the world in white.

But when her rising form was seen -
To reach the crisis of fifteen,
Her parents up the mountain's head,
With anxious step their darling led;

By turns they snatch'd her to their breast,
And thus the fears of age express'd.

O! j yful cause of many a care!
O daughter too divinely fair!
Yon world, on this important day,
Demands thee to a dang'rous way;
A painful journey all must go,
Whole doubted period none can know,
Whose due direction who can find,
Where reason's mute, and sense is blind?
Ah, what unequal leaders these,
Thro' such a wide, perplexing maze!
Then mark the warnings of the wise,
And learn what love and years advise.

Far to the right thy prospect bend,
Where yonder tow'ring hills ascend:
Lo, there the arduous paths in view,
Which virtue, and her sons pursue;
With toil o'er less'ning earth they rise,
And gain, and gain upon the skies.
Narrow's the way her children tread,
No walk, for pleasure smoothly spread,
But rough, and difficult, and steep,
Painful to climb, and hard to keep.

Fruits

Fruits immature those lands dispense,
A food indelicate to sense,
Of taste unpleasant; yet from those
Pure health, with cheerful vigour flows,
And strength, unfeeling of decay,
Throughout the long, laborious way.

Hence, as they scale that heav'nly road,
Each limb is lightened of its load;
From earth resigning still they go,
And leave the mortal weight below;
Then spreads the strait, the doubtful clears,
And smooth the rugged path appears;
For custom turns fatigue to ease,
And, taught by virtue, pain can please.
At length, the toilsome journey o'er,
And near the bright, celestial shore,
A gulph, black, fearful, and profound,
Appears, of either world the bound,
Thro' darkness, leading up to light;
Sense backwards shrinks, and shuns the sight
For there the transitory train,
Of time, and form, and care, and pain,
And matter's gross, incumb'ring mass,
Man's late associates, cannot pass,

But

But sinking, quit th' immortal charge,
And leave the wond'ring soul at large;
Lightly she wings her obvious way,
And mingles with eternal day.

Thither, O thither wing thy speed,
Tho' pleasure charm, or pain impede;
To such th'all bounteous pow'r has giv'n,
For present earth, a future heav'n;
For trivial loss, unmeasur'd gain,
And endless bliss; for transient pain.

Then fear, ah! fear to turn thy sight,
Where yonder flow'ry fields invite;
Wide on the left the path way bends,
And with pernicious ease descends;
There sweet to sense, and fair to show,
New-planted Edens seem to blow,
Trees, that delicious poison bear,
For death is vegetable there.

Hence is the frame of health unbrace'd,
Each sinew slack'ning at the taste,
The soul to passion yields her throne,
And sees with organs not her own;
While, like the slumb'rer in the night,
Pleas'd with the shadowy dream of light,

Before

Before her alienated eyes,
The scenes of fairy-land arise;
The puppet world's amusing show,
Dipt in the gayly-colour'd bow,
Scepters, and wreaths, and glittering things,
The toys of infants, and of kings,
That tempt, along the baneful plain,
The idly wise, and lightly vain,
Till verging on the gulphy shore,
Sudden they sink, and rise no more.

But list to what thy fates declare;
Tho' thou art woman, frail as fair,
If once thy sliding foot should stray,
Once quit yon heav'n-appointed way,
For thee, lost maid, for thee alone,
Nor pray'rs shall plead, nor tears atone;
Reproach, scorn, infamy, and hate,
On thy returning steps shall wait,
Thy form be loath'd by every eye,
And every foot thy presence fly.

Thus arm'd with words of potent sound,
Like guardian angels place'd around,
A charm, by truth divinely cast,
Forward, our young advent'rer pass'd

Forth

Forth from her sacred eye-lids sent,
Like morn, fore running radiance went,
While honour, hand-maid late assign'd
Upheld her lucid train behind.
Awe-struck the much admiring crowd
Before the virgin vision bow'd,
Gaz'd with an ever new delight,
And caught fresh virtue at the sight;
For not of earth's unequal frame
They deem the heav'n-compounded Dame;
If matter, sure the most refin'd,
High wrought, and temper'd into mind,
Some darling daughter of the day,
And body'd by her native ray.

Where-e'er she passes, thousands bend,
And thousands where she moves attend;
Her ways observant eyes confess,
Her steps pursuing praises blest;
While to the elevated Maid
Oblations, as to heav'n are paid.

'Twas on an ever blithesome day,
The jovial birth of rosy May,
When genial warmth, no more suppress'd,
New melts the frost in ev'ry breast,

The

The cheek with secret flushing dies;
And looks kind things from chasteſt eyes;
The ſun with healthier viſage glows,
Aſide his clouded kerchief throws,
And dances up th' ætherial plain,
Where late he us'd to climb with pain,
While nature, as from bonds ſet free,
Springs out and gives a looſe to glee.

And now for momentary reſt,
The nymph her travell'd ſtep repreſs'd,
Juſt turn'd to view the ſtage attain'd,
And glory'd in the height ſhe gain'd.
Out-ſtretch'd before her wide ſurvey,
The realms of ſweet perdition lay,
And pity touch'd her ſoul with woe,
To ſee a world ſo loſt below;
When ſtraight the breeze began to breath
Airs gently waſted from beneath,
That bore commiſſion'd witchcraft thence
And reach'd her ſympathy of ſenſe;
No ſounds of diſcord, that diſcloſe
A people ſunk and loſt in woes,
But as of preſent good poſſeſs'd,
The very triumph of the bleſs'd.

The

The maid in rapt attention hung,
While thus approaching Sirens sung
Hither, fairest, hither haste,
Brightest beauty, come and taste
What the pow'rs of bliss unfold,
Joys, too mighty to be told;
Taste what extasies they give,
Dying raptures taste and live.

In thy lap, disdaining measure,
Nature empties all her treasure,
Soft desires that sweetly languish,
Fierce delights that rise to anguish;
Fairest, dost thou yet delay?
Brightest beauty, come away.

Lift not, when the froward chide,
Sons of pedantry and pride,
Snarlers, to whose feeble sense
April's sunshine is offence;
Age and envy will advise
Ev'n against the joy they prize.

Come, in pleasure's balmy bowl,
Slake the thirstings of thy soul,
Till thy raptur'd pow'rs are fainting
With enjoyment, past the painting;

Fairest, dost thou yet delay;
Brightest beauty, come away.

So sang the Sirens, as of yore,
Upon the false Ausonian shore,
And O! for that preventing chain,
That bound Ulysses on the main,
That so our fair one might withstand
The covert ruin now at hand.

The song her charm'd attention drew,
When now the tempters stood in view
Curiosity, with prying eyes,
And hands of busy bold emprise;
Like Hermes feather'd were her feet,
And, like fore-running fancy, fleet.
By search untaught, by toil untir'd,
To novelty she still aspir'd,
Tasteless of every good possess'd,
And but in expectation bless'd.

With her, associate, Pleasure came,
Gay pleasure, frolic-loving dame,
Her mien all swimming in delight,
Her beauties half reveal'd to sight;
Loose flow'd her garments from the ground,
And caught the kissing wings around.

As erst Medusa's looks were known
To turn beholders into stone,
A dire reversion here they felt,
And in the eye of pleasure melt.
Her glance with sweet persuasion charm'd;
Unnerv'd the strong, the steel'd disarm'd;
No safety ev'n the flying find,
Who vent'rous, look but once behind.

Thus was the much admiring maid,
While distant, more than half betray'd.
With smiles and adulation bland,
They join'd her side, and seiz'd her hand
Their touch envenom'd sweets instill'd,
Her frame with new pulsations thrill'd;
While half consenting, half denying,
Reluctant now, and now complying,
Amidst a war of hopes, and fears,
Of trembling wishes, smiling tears,
Still down, and down, the winning Pair
Compell'd the struggling, yielding Fair.
As when some stately vessel bound
To blest Arabia's distant ground,
Borne from her courses haply lights
Where Barca's flow'ry clime invites,
Conceal'd

Conceal'd around whose treach'rous land
Lurk the dire rock and dang'rous sand;
The pilot warns with sail and oar,
To shun the much suspected shore,
In vain; the tide too subtly strong,
Still bears the wrestling bark along,
Till found'ring, she resigns to fate,
And sinks o'erwhelm'd with all her freight

So, baffling ev'ry bar to sin,
And heav'n's own pilot place'd within,
Along the devious smooth descent,
With pow'rs increasing as they went,
The dames accustom'd to subdue,
As with a rapid current drew,
And o'er the fatal bounds convey'd
The lost, the long reluctant maid.

Here stop, ye fair ones, and beware,
Nor send your fond affections there;
Yet, yet your darling, now deplor'd,
May turn, to you, and heav'n, restor'd;
Till then, with weeping honour wait,
The servant of her better fate,
With honour, left upon the shore,
Her friend, and handmaid now no more,

Nor, with the guilty world, upbraid
The fortunes of a wretch betray'd ;
But o'er her failing cast a veil,
Rememb'ring, you yourselves are frail.

And, now from all enquiring light,
Fast fled the conscious shades of night ;
The Damsel, from a short repose,
Confounded at her plight, arose.

As when with slumbrous weight oppress'd,
Some wealthy miser sinks to rest,
Where felons eye the glittering prey,
And steal his hoord of joys away ;
He, borne where golden Indus streams,
Of pearl and quarry'd diamond dreams,
Like Midas turns the glebe to oar,
And stands all wrapt amidst his store,
But wakens, naked and despoil'd
Of that, for which his years had toil'd.

So far'd the Nymph, her treasure flown,
And turn'd, like Niobe, to stone,
Within, without, obscure, and void,
She felt all ravag'd, all destroy'd.
And O thou curs'd insidious coast:
Are these the blessings thou canst boast?

These

These virtue ! these the joys they find,
Who leave thy heav'n-top'd hills behind ?
Shade me, ye pines, ye caverns, hide,
Ye mountains, cover me, she cried !

Her trumpet blunder rais'd on high,
And told the tydings to the sky ;
Contempt discharg'd a living dart,
A life long viper to her heart ;
Reproach breath'd poisons o'er her face,
And fold'd and blatt'd ev'ry grace ;
Officious shame, her handmaid new,
Still turn'd the mirror to her view,
While those in crimes the deepest d' d
Approach'd to whiten at her side,
And ev'ry lewd, insulting dame
Upon her folly rose to fame.

What should she do ? Attempt once more
To gain the late deserted shore ?
So trusting, back the Mourner flew,
As fast the train of Fends pursue.

Again the farther shore's attain'd,
Again the land of virtue gain'd ;
But echo gathers in the wind,
And shows her instant foes behind.

Araz'd, with headlong speed she treads,
Where late she left an host of friends;
Alas! those franking friends decline,
Nor long retain that form divine,
With fear they mark the following cry,
And from the lonely Trembler fly,
Or backward drive her on the coast,
Where peace was wreck'd, and honour lost.
From earth, thus hoping aid in vain,
To heav'n, not daring to complain,
No truce by hostile clamour giv'n,
And from the face of friendship driv'n,
The Nymph sinks prostrate on the ground,
With all her weight of woes around.

Enthron'd within a circling sky,
Upon a mount, o'er mountains high,
All radiant late, as in a shrine,
Virtue, first effluence divine;
Far, far above the scenes of woe,
That shut this cloud wrapt world below;
Superior goddess, essence bright,
Beauty of uncreated light,
Whom should mortality survey,
As doom'd upon a certain day,

The

The breath of frailty must expire,
The world dissolve in living fire,
The gems of heav'n, and solar flame
Be quench'd by her eternal beam,
And nature, quick'ning in her eye,
To rise a new-born phoenix, die.

Hence, unreveal'd to mortal view,
A veil around her form she threw,
Which three sad sisters of the shade
Pain, Care, and Melancholy made.

Thro' this her all-enquiring eye,
Attentive from her station high,
Beheld, abandon'd to despair,
The ruins of her fav'rite fair;
And with a voice, whose awful sound
Appal'd the guilty world around,
Bid the tumultuous winds be still,
To numbers bow'd each list'ning hill,
Uncurl'd the farging of the main,
And smooth'd the thorny bed of pain,
The golden harp of heav'n she strung,
And thus the tuneful goddess sang.

“ Lovely Penitent, arise,
Come, and claim thy kindred skies,

Come

Come, thy sister angels say,
Thou hast wept thy stains away.

Let experience now decide
'Twixt the good, and evil try'd.
In the smooth, enchanted ground,
Say, unfold the treasures found.

Structures, rais'd by morning dreams
Sands, that trip the flitting streams,
Down, that anchors on the air,
Clouds, that paint their changes there.

Seas, that smoothly dimpling lie,
While the storm impends on high,
Showing, in an obvious glass,
Joys that in possession pass;

Transient, fickle, light, and gay,
Flatt'ring, only to betray;
What, alas, can life contain!
Life! like all it's circles—vain.

Will the stork, intending rest,
On the billow build her nest?
Will the bee demand his store
From the bleak, and bladeless shore?

Man alone, intent to stray,
Ever turns from wisdom's way,

Lays

Lays up wealth in foreign land,
Sows the sea, and plows the fund.

Soon this elemental mass,
Soon th'incumb'ring world shall pass,
Form be wrapt in wasting fire,
Time be spent, and life expire.

Then, ye boasted works of men,
Where is your asylum then?
Sons of pleasure, sons of care,
Tell me mortals, tell me where?

Gone, like traces on the deep,
Like a scepter, grasp'd in sleep,
Dews, exhal'd from morning glades,
Melting snows, and gliding shades.

Pass the world, and what's behind?
Virtue's gold, by fire refin'd;
From an universe deprav'd,
From the wreck of nature sav'd.

Like the life-supporting grain,
Fruit of patience, and of pain,
On the swain's autumnal day
Winnow'd from the chaff away.

Little trembler, fear no more,
Thou hast plenteous crops in store,

Seed,

Seed, by genial sorrows sown,
More than all thy scorners own.

What tho' hostile earth despise,
Heav'n beholds with gentler eyes;
Heav'n thy friendless steps shall guide,
Chear thy hours, and guard thy side.

When the fatal trump shall sound,
When th' immortals pour around,
Heav'n shall thy return attest,
Hail'd by myriads of the bless'd.

Little native of the skies,
Lovely penitent, arise;
Calm thy bosom, clear thy brow,
Virtue is thy sister now.

More delightful are my woes,
Than the rapture, pleasure knows:
Richer far the weeds I bring,
Than the robes that grace a king.

On my wars, of shortest date,
Crowns of endless triumph wait;
On my cares a period bless'd;
On my toils, eternal rest.

Come

FABLES.

95

Come, with virtue at thy side,
Come, be ev'ry bar defy'd,
'Till we gain our native shore,
Sister, come and turn no more.

F A B.



F A B. XVI.

Love and VANITY.

THE breezy morning breath'd perfume,
The wak'ning flow'rs unveil'd their
bloom,

Up with the sun, from short repose,
Gay health, and lusty labour rose,
The milkmaid carol'd at her pail,
And shepherds whistled o'er the dale;
When Love, who led a rural life,
Remote from bustle, state, and strife,
Forth from his thatch'd-roof'd cottage stray'd,
And stroll'd along the dewy glade.

A nymph, who lightly trip'd it by,
To quick attention turn'd his eye,
He mark'd the gesture of the Fair,
Her self-sufficient grace and air,
Her steps, that mincing meant to please,
Her study'd negligence, and ease;
And curious to enquire what meant
This thing of prettiness, and paint,

Approaching spoke, and bow'd observant;
The lady, slightly,—Sir, your servant.

Such beauty in so rude a place!

Fair one, you do the country grace;
At court, no doubt, the public care;
But Love has small acquaintance there.
Yes, Sir, reply'd the flutt'ring dame,
This form confesses whence it came;
But dear variety, you know,
Can make us pride and pomp forego.
My name is Vanity. I sway
The utmost islands of the sea;
Within my court all honour centers,
I raise the meanest soul that enters;
Endow' with latent gifts and graces,
And model fools for posts and places.

As Vanity appoints, at pleasure,
The world receives it's weight and measure;
Hence all the grand concerns of life,
Joys, cares, plagues, passions, peace and strife.

Reflect how far my pow'r prevails,
When I step in where nature fails,
And ev'ry breach of sense repairing,
Am bounteous still, where heav'n is sparing.

K

But

But chief, in all their arts and airs,
Their playing, painting, pouts, and prayers,
Their various habits, and complexions,
Fits, frolicks, foibles, and perfections,
Their robing, curling, and adorning,
From noon to night, from night to morning,
From six to sixty, sick or sound,
I rule the female world around.

Hold there a moment, Cupid cry'd,
Nor boast dominion quite so wide.
Was there no province to invade,
But that by Love and Meekness sway'd?
All other empire I resign,
But be the sphere of beauty mine.

For in the downy lawn of rest,
That opens on a woman's breast,
Attended by my peaceful train,
I chuse to live, and chuse to reign.

Far-sighted faith I bring along,
And truth, above an army strong;
And chastity, of icy mold,
Within the burning tropics cold;
And lowliness, to whose mild brow
The pow'r and pride of nations bow;

And

And modesty, with downcast eye,
That lends the morn her virgin dye ;
And innocence, array'd in light ;
And honour, as a tow'r upright :
With sweetly winning graces, more
Than poets ever dreamt of yore ;
In unaffected conduct free,
All smiling sisters, three times three ;
And rosy peace, the cherub blest'd,
That nightly sings us all to rest.

Hence, from the bud of nature's prime,
From the first step of infant time,
Woman, the world's appointed light,
Has skirted ev'ry shade with white ;
Has stood for imitation high,
To ev'ry heart and ev'ry eye ;
From ancient deeds of fair renown,
Has brought her bright memorials down ;
To time affix'd perpetual youth,
And form'd each tale of love and truth.

Upon a new Promothean plan,
She moulds the essence of a man ;
Tempers his mass, his genius fires,
And as a better soul inspires.

The rude she softens, warms the cold,
Exalts the meek, and checks the bold ;
Calls sloth from his supine repose,
Within the coward's bosom glows,
Of pride unplumes the lofty crest,
Bids bashful merit stand confess'd ;
And, like coarse metal from the mines,
Collects, irradiates, and refines.

The gentle science she imparts,
All manners smooths, informs all hearts ;
From her sweet influence are felt
Passions that please, and thoughts that melt ;
To stormy rage she bids controul,
And sinks serenely on the soul,
Softens Deucalion's flinty race,
And tunes the warring world to peace.

Thus arm'd, to all that's light and vain,
And freed from thy fantastic chain,
She fills the sphere by heav'n assign'd,
And, rul'd by me, o'er rules mankind.

He spoke. The nymph impatient stood,
And, laughing, thus her speech renew'd.

And pray, Sir, may I be so bold
To hope your pretty tale is told ?

And

And next demand, without a cavil,
What new Utopia do you travel?—
Upon my word, these high-flown fancies
Shew depth of learning in romances.

Why, what unfashion'd stuff you tell us,
Of buckram dames, and tiptoe fellows!
Go, child; and when you're grown maturer,
You'll suit your next opinion surer.

O such a pretty knack at painting!
And all for soft'ning, and for fainting!
Guess now, who can, a single feature,
Thro' the whole piece of female nature!
Then mark! my looser hand may fit
The lines too coarse for love to hit.

'Tis said, that woman, prone to changing;
Thro' all the rounds of folly ranging,
On life's uncertain ocean riding,
No reason, rule, nor rudder guiding,
Is like the comet's wandring light,
Eccentric, ominous, and bright;
Traetlefs, and shifting as the wind;
A sea, whose fathom none can find;
A moon, still changing and revolving;
A riddle, past all human solving;

A bliss, a plague, a heaven, a hell;
A — something, that no man can tell.

Now learn a secret from a friend,
But keep your council, and attend.

Tho' in their tempers thought so distant,
Nor with their sex, nor selves, consistent;
'Tis but the difference of a name,
And ev'ry woman is the same.
For as the world, however vary'd,
And thro' unnumber'd changes carry'd,
Of elemental modes and forms,
Clouds, meteors, colours, calms and storms,
Tho' in a thousand suits array'd,
Is of one subject matter made;
So, Sir, a woman's constitution,
The world's enigma, finds solution;
And let her form be what you will,
I am the subject essence still.

With the first spark of female sense,
The speck of being, I commence;
Within the womb make fresh advances,
And dictate future qualms, and fancies;
Thence in the growing form expand,
With childhood travel hand in hand,

And

And give a taste of all their joys,
In gewgaws, rattles, pomp, and noise.

And now, familiar and unaw'd,
I send the flutt'ring soul abroad;
Prais'd for her shape, her air, her mein,
The little goddess, and the queen,
Takes at her infant shrine oblation,
And drinks sweet draughts of adulation.

Now blooming, tall, erect, and fair,
To dress, becomes her darling care;
The realms of beauty then I bound,
I swell the hoop's enchanted round,
Shrink in the waist's descending size,
Heav'd in the snowy bosom, rise,
High on the floating lapper sail,
Or, curl'd in tresses, kiss the gale.
Then to her glass I lead the fair,
And shew the lovely idol there,
Where, struck as by divine emotion,
She bows with most sincere devotion;
And, numb'ring every beauty o'er,
In secret bids the world adore.

Then all for parking, and parading,
Coquetting, dancing, masquerading;

For

For balls, plays, courts, and crouds, what
passion!

And churches, sometimes—if the fashion;
For woman's sense of right and wrong
Is rul'd by the almighty throng;
Still turns to each meander tame,
And swims, the straw of ev'ry stream.
Her soul intrinsic worth rejects,
Accomplish'd only in defects;
Such excellence is her ambition,
Folly, her wisest acquisition;
And ev'n from pity, and disdain,
She'll cull some reason to be vain.

Thus, Sir, from ev'ry form, and feature,
The wealth, and wants, of female nature,
And ev'n from vice, which you'd admire,
I gather fuel to my fire;
And on the very base of shame
Erect my monument of fame.

Let me another truth attempt,
Of which your godship has not dreamt.

Those shining virtues which you muster,
Whence think you they derive their lustre?

From

From native honour, and devotion?

O yes, a mighty likely notion!

Trust me, from titled dames to spinners,

'Tis I make saints, whoe'er makes sinners;

'Tis I instruct them to withdraw,

And hold presumptuous man in awe;

For female worth, as I inspire,

In just degrees, still mounts the higher,

And virtue, so extremely nice,

Demands long toil and mighty price;

Like Sampson's pillars, fix'd elate,

I bear the sex's tottering state,

Sap these, and in a moment's space,

Down sinks the fabric to its base.

Alike from titles, and from toys,

I spring, the fount of female joys;

In ev'ry widow, wife, and miss,

The sole artificer of bliss;

For them each tropic I explore,

I cleave the sand of ev'ry shore;

To them, uniting India's sail,

Sabea breathes her farthest gale:

For them the bullion I refine,

Dig sense, and virtue from the mine;

And

And, from the bowels of invention,
Spin out the various arts you mention.

Nor bliss alone my pow'rs bestow,
They hold the sovereign balm of woe;
Beyond the Stoic's boasted art,
I soothe the heavings of the heart;
To pain give splendor, and relief,
And gild the pallid face of grief.

Alike, the palace and the plain
Admit the glories of my reign;
Thro' ev'ry age, in ev'ry nation,
Taste, talents, tempers, state, and station,
Whate'er a woman says, I say;
Whate'er a woman spends, I pay;
Alike I fill and empty bags,
Flutter in finery, and rags;
With light coquettes thro' folly range,
And with the prude disdain to change.
And now you'd think, 'twixt you and I,
That things were ripe for a reply——
But soft, and, while I'm in the mood,
Kindly permit me to conclude;
Their utmost mazes to unravel,
And touch the fairest step they travel.

When

When ev'ry pleasure's run aground,
And folly tir'd thro' many a round,
The nymph, conceiving discontent hence,
May ripen to an hour's repentance,
And vapours, shed in pious moisture,
Dismiss her to a church or cloyster;
Then on I lead her, with devotion,
Conspicuous in her dress and motion;
Inspire the heav'nly-breathing air,
Roll up the lucid eye in pray'r,
Soften the voice, and in the face
Look melting harmony and grace.
Thus far extends my friendly pow'r,
Nor quits her in her latest hour;
The couch of decent pain I spread,
In form recline her languid head,
Her thoughts I methodize in death,
And part not with her parting breath;
Then do I set, in order bright,
A length of funeral pomp o' sight,
The glitt'ring tapers and attire,
The plumes, that whiten o'er her bier;
And last, presenting to her eye
Angelic fineries on high,

To

To scenes of painted bliss I waft her,
And form the heav'n she hopes hereafter.

In truth, rejoin'd love's gentle god,
You've gone a tedious length of road,
And strange, in all the toilsome way,
No house of kind refreshment lay,
No nymph, whose virtues might have tempt-
ed,

To hold her from her sex exempted.

For one we'll never quarrel, man;
Take her, and keep her, if you can;
And pleas'd, I yield to your petition,
Since ev'ry fair, by such permission,
Will hold herself the one selected,
And so my system stands protected.

O deaf to virtue, deaf to glory,
To truths divinely vouch'd in story!
The godhead in his zeal return'd,
And kindling at her malice burn'd.
Then sweetly rais'd his voice, and told
Of heavn'ly nymphs rever'd of old;
Hypsipyle, who sav'd her fire,
And Portia's love, approv'd by fire,

Alike

Alike Penelope was quoted,
Nor laurell'd Daphne pass'd unnoted,
Nor Laodamia's fatal garter,
Nor fam'd Lucretia, honour's martyr,
Alceste's voluntary steel,
And Catherine, smiling on the wheel.
But who can hope to plant conviction
Where cavil grows on contradiction?
Some she evades, or disavows,
Demurs to all, and none allows;
A kind of antient thing call'd Fables!
And thus the Goddess turn'd the tables.

Now both in argument grew high,
And choler flash'd from either eye;
Nor wonder each refus'd to yield
The conquest of so fair a field.

When happily arriv'd in view
A Goddess whom our grandames knew,
Of aspect grave, and sober gait,
Majestic, awful, and serene,
As heaven's autumnal eve serene,
When not a cloud obscures the scene:
Once Prudence call'd, a matron fam'd,
And in old Rome, Cornelia nam'd.

Quick at a venture, both agree
To leave their strife to her decree.

And now by each the facts were stated,
In form and manner as related,
The case was short. They crav'd opinion,
Which held o'er females chief dominion:
When thus the goddess, answ'ring mild,
First shook her gracious head and smil'd.

Alas, how willing to comply,
Yet how unfit a judge am I!
In times of golden date, 'tis true,
I shar'd the fickle sex with you;
But from their presence long precluded,
Or held as one, whose form intruded,
Full fifty annual suns can tell,
Prudence has bid the sex farewell.

In this dilemma what to do,
Or who to think of, neither knew;
For both still bias'd in opinion,
And arrogant of sole dominion,
Were forc'd to hold the case compounded,
Or leave the quarrel where they found it.

When in the nick, a rural fair,
Of inexperience'd gait, and air,

I

Who

Who ne'er had cross'd the neighb'ring lake,
Nor seen the world, beyond a wake,
With cambrick coif, and kerchief clean,
Tript lightly by them o'er the green.
Now, now I cry'd love's triumphant child,
And at approaching conquest smil'd,
If Vanity will once be guided,
Our difference soon may be decided;
Behold yon wench a fit occasion
To try your force of gay persuasion.
Go you, while I retire aloof,
Go, put those boasted pow'rs to proof;
And if your prevalence of art
Transcends my yet unnerring dart,
I give the fav'rite contest o'er,
And ne'er will boast my empire more.

At once, so said, and so consented;
And well our goddesses seem'd contented,
Nor pausing made a moment's stand,
But trip't and took the girl in hand.

Meanwhile the godhead, unalarm'd,
As one to each occasion arm'd,
Forth from his quiver cull'd a dart,
That erst had wounded many a heart;

Then bending, drew it to the head;
The bow-string twang'd, the arrow fled,
And, to her secret soul address'd,
Transfix'd the whiteness of her breast.

But here the dame, whose guardian care
Had to a moment watch'd the fair,
At once her pocket mirror drew,
And held the wonder full in view;
As quickly rang'd in order bright,
A thousand beauties rush to sight,
A world of charms till now unknown,
A world reveal'd to her alone;
Enraptur'd stands the love-sick maid,
Suspended o'er the darling shade,
Here only fixes to admire,
And centers ev'ry fond desire.

F I N I S.



